



Meeting Jesus (PART 4):

# The Prophesied One

JOHN 1:43-46

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This morning we return to our series of lessons on “Meeting Jesus.” Over the past few weeks, of course, we have been looking at the last half of John 1 as the first apostles start meeting Jesus for the very first time, and we’ve been noticing the titles or descriptions given to Jesus during those first meetings. We started with Jesus being introduced by John as the LAMB OF GOD who takes away the sin of the world. We learned, then, that as the Lamb of God, Jesus is completely worthy of our worship in every way. As the Lamb of God, He took our place on the cross.

Two weeks ago, we continued on with verses 38-39, and we saw Jesus introduced as a RABBI or TEACHER. Andrew and John want to learn, so they address Jesus as a teacher. And we closed that lesson by asking whether we also see Jesus as our Teacher. Are we learning from the Lord? Are we students of the Lord? Are we actively looking into the word of God so that we can learn more and more about him?

Last week, we moved on to John 1:40-42, and we learned that Andrew finds his brother Simon, and he introduces Jesus to his brother as **“the MESSIAH,”** **“we have found the Messiah”** (which translated means CHRIST). And we learned that these terms (in Hebrew and Greek) basically refer to Jesus as being God’s **“ANointed.”** So we learned, then, that Jesus is our KING, and that he has every right to rule over us. We also learned something from Andrew last week, that Andrew is to be admired for going and getting his brother! So instead of asking, “What would Jesus do?” as we sometimes do, we talked about asking, “What would Andrew do?” Andrew would invite others to get to know Jesus, and Andrew serves as a great example for us today. Here in Madison, we have many opportunities for inviting - we have the cards, and tracts, and wooden nickels, we have a great website and a social media and online presence, and we learned that all of these are simply tools for doing what Andrew did. We also learned something from the fact that Jesus gave Simon a new name - **“Cephas”** or **“Rock,”** as it is translated, and we learned from that event that Jesus has the power to see us, not just for what we are, but Jesus can see us for what we can become. Ultimately, though, the lesson is that Jesus is our King. He is worthy of us telling others about, and he has the power to change us. He has the power to see our potential.

This morning, we return to John 1, and we come to the next few verses - John 1:43-46 - and in these verses, we are introduced to a new apostle, and in his excitement, this new apostle immediately goes out and finds

someone else, and as he does, he gives us another explanation or description of who Jesus is. Notice, please, John 1:43-46,

***<sup>43</sup> The next day He purposed to go into Galilee, and He found Philip. And Jesus said to him, "Follow Me."<sup>44</sup> Now Philip was from Bethsaida, of the city of Andrew and Peter. <sup>45</sup> Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."<sup>46</sup> Nathanael said to him, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see."***

So, the new description, then, is that Jesus is the fulfillment of prophecy, ***"We have found Him of whom Moses in the La and also the Prophets wrote - Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."*** On the wall up here, I have labeled this lesson as "The Prophesied One" (this was as short as I could make it)! But Jesus is the answer to prophecy. What I love about the image up here is that if you look carefully you can actually see words, and those words are some of the actual prophecies about Jesus from the Old Testament. I want us to move through this passage by looking at three very important truths.

I. **And the first truth or observation we make in this passage is that JESUS FINDS PHILIP AND SAYS TO HIM. "FOLLOW ME."**

In this passage, we learn that all of this happens ***"the next day."*** In other words, this is all happening rather quickly. If I have figured correctly, it seems that we are looking at a series of events that happened three days in a row at this point. And on this third day (the ***"next day"***), Jesus finds Philip. The name Philip, by the way, is a Greek name, and it literally means "horse lover." So, similar to our discussion of Andrew from last week, we don't know whether his parents were hoping he would grow up to love horses, or whether this is a name that ran in his family, or whether he is actually a horse lover and was given this name by his friends. Or, it might have been that his parents just liked the name Philip. We don't know. But we do know that it is a Greek name, and we also know that Philip is the only one of the apostles who is ONLY known by his Greek name. Some apostles had both Greek and Hebrew names, but Philip is the only one with only a Greek name.

We learn in this passage that Philip is ***"from Bethsaida, of the city of Andrew and Peter."*** Bethsaida is a village located right at the point where the Jordan River empties into the Sea of Galilee at its northernmost tip. The Jordan leaves the Sea of Galilee at the southern tip, but it comes into Galilee in the north. And as you can imagine, Bethsaida is a fishing village.

Here in Madison, I think of where the Yahara River comes into Lake Mendota, up near Northport Drive and Highway M. What's up there? What's at that spot? Well, we have Pharo Marine and Skipper Buds - these are boat dealers and suppliers. They sell and rent and repair boats and fishing equipment. What else is at that intersection? We have Mariner's Inn and Naut-i-gal, seafood restaurants. We have marinas. Betty Lou Cruises is based up there. So, in my mind, Bethsaida is like that. Bethsaida is the First Century version of the intersection of Northport Drive and Highway M. Bethsaida is a fishing village. Bethsaida is the home of Peter, Andrew, and here we learn it is also the home of Philip. Bethsaida is the place where Jesus walks on water (Mark 6:45-51). Bethsaida is the place where Jesus heals a blind man (Mark 8:22-25). Bethsaida is where Jesus feeds the 5,000 (Luke 9:12-17). And yet, we also know that Bethsaida is a place Jesus cursed (in Matthew 11:21), because in spite of seeing all of these amazing things, the people in that city still had not turned from their sins. And yet it is in this rather evil and unbelieving city that Jesus finds several of his apostles.

While we are on Philip, I should also point out that John's gospel account is the only place where we learn anything about Philip other than his name. He is listed in the others, but John is the only place where we actually learn something about this man. We have the account of him being called by Jesus (here in John 1), we have the Greeks who approach Philip looking to have a meeting with Jesus, we have Jesus interacting with Philip at the feeding of the 5,000, we have Philip speaking up in John 14 and asking Jesus to show them the Father. All of these accounts are only found in John.

But before we move on from Philip, I want us to remember that Philip is the first apostle where Jesus finds him instead of the other way around. Up to this point, the others have found Jesus, but now Jesus is doing the finding. And I'm wondering: Why? Why do we have this little detail? Why didn't Andrew and Peter find Philip and bring him to Jesus? Why does Philip need to be found by the Lord himself, instead of the other way around? I don't know! Some have suggested that Philip was somewhat introverted. Some have suggested that Philip was more of a behind-the-scenes type guy. Some have suggested that Philip is the kind of guy you might accidentally forget to invite to a party. Ultimately, we don't know, but we do know that Philip is quite thoughtful. Philip is smart. As we will see in just a moment, Philip knows the Law, he knows the Prophets, and he very quickly makes the connection that Jesus is the answer to those prophecies. Philip is the one who quickly realizes that it would take more than 200 days' wages to feed the 5,000 (in John 6). Philip is the human calculator. Philip might have been the geek of the bunch. And again, Philip is the one who was somewhat hesitant to bring those Greeks to Jesus directly. You might remember from our discussion last week, that Philip goes and gets Andrew, and the two of them take those men to Jesus together. Philip, then, was more reserved and thoughtful. But for whatever reason, Jesus finds him - not the other way around. Philip is the kind of guy who can think things through, but he needs some encouragement to act. He needs Jesus to say it, **"Follow me!"** And this is a reminder to us that Jesus is the only one who really has the authority to say something like that.

II. **As we go back to our text, we continue, and the second big idea from this passage comes as Philip finds Nathanael and explains that he has found THE ONE WHO IS WRITTEN ABOUT BY MOSES IN THE LAW AND ALSO BY THE PROPHETS - JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE SON OF JOSEPH.**

And with this, we see a pattern continue - someone finds the Lord, they are convinced of some aspect of the Lord's character or qualifications, and they immediately go and tell someone about it. Jesus is the Lamb of God, he is the Teacher, he is the Messiah, and now we come to this passage as Philip is convinced that Jesus is the one written about in the Law and in the Prophets. Jesus is the fulfillment of prophecy. I laughed out loud a bit as I realized this week that Philip seems to exaggerate just a bit - he says, **"We have found Him..."** Does Philip find Jesus? Or is it the other way around? Philip might have thought that it was he himself who does the finding here, but as we just learned in verse 43, it is actually Jesus who finds Philip! So, what he is saying here is that once they meet each other, Philip very quickly figures out that Jesus is more than just an ordinary human being. He finds Jesus in the sense that he discovers Jesus as being the answer to everything that had been written in times past. Jesus is the answer to Scripture.

And so to Philip, it's not that this guy Jesus is pretty neat, or he is a good speaker, or he has done some cool things, but Philip is convinced that Jesus is the One. We have found him! Jesus is the end of our searching! I think about the work my sister does with search and rescue out in the Pacific Northwest. Most searches start out with a description. They are looking for somebody, and this person has a certain height, and weight, and hair color - this is what they are wearing, they have blue shoes, they have a red pack (or whatever) - and there is hopefully a point in the search where they find someone who matches that description, and they come to the conclusion that the search is over - they have found this person they've been looking for. And that, in a

sense, is what happens here. Based on what he knows from Moses and the Prophets, Philip has this picture of the Messiah, and when he meets the Lord face-to-face, it doesn't take him long to conclude: This is the One we've been looking for! This man is the answer to prophecy!

And I would emphasize: These men are so convinced that they are willing to leave everything! Some of the other accounts indicate that they drop their fishing nets. They leave everything behind, and they follow the Lord. They are convinced that Jesus is the One prophesied in Scripture. Philip doesn't give a specific passage or prophecy that Jesus fulfills, but we know that there are many. We think of a passage like Gary read for us earlier, from Deuteronomy 18, where God promised at some point in the future to raise up a prophet like Moses. And he did. You might remember that the Jews were looking for the fulfillment of that prophecy in the First Century. In fact, earlier in this chapter (in John 1:21), the religious leaders come to John the Baptist and ask him, ***"Are you the prophet?"*** In other words, they want to know if he is the prophet like Moses. Of course, John says, "No," but he is preparing the way for the Prophet. Philip, then, sees Jesus as being the fulfillment of prophecy.

In his statement to Nathanael, Philip identifies the Lord as ***"Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."*** Some commentaries point out that Philip is basically wrong here. Is Jesus really from Nazareth? Is he really the son of Joseph? Others, though, point out that this is basically a legal description of Jesus. At that time, people were identified 1.) by where they are from, and 2) by their father. They didn't have driver's licenses and Social Security numbers. If I lived back then, I would be "Baxter of Crystal Lake, son of Ray." And that would distinguish me from all of the other Baxters in this world. Philip, then, identifies Jesus as being from Nazareth, the son of Joseph. But the point is: Philip realizes that Jesus is the fulfillment of prophecy.

And the first thing he does is to go and to tell his friend Nathanael, ***"We have found Him..."*** By the way, most of us already know this little phrase in Greek. Have we ever heard someone say, "Eureka"? That goes back to the scholar Archimedes, when he stepped into the bath tub, saw the water rising, and realized that the volume of water displaced must be equal to the volume of the part of his body that was submerged in the water. Legend has it that he supposedly jumped out of the tub and ran through the village naked as he shouted, "Eureka! Eureka!" "Eureka" means, "I found it!" Philip uses a form of that word in verse 45 when he says, ***"We have found Him..."*** So, in a sense, this is Philip's "eureka moment." Like Archimedes, he has discovered something amazing, and he has to tell somebody about it immediately.

What does this mean for us? Obviously, it means that we also need to have that same level of enthusiasm, and we also need to be telling people about it. The only way this message gets out is through us. As Paul asks in Romans 10:14, ***"How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?"*** We are the preachers in this passage. We are the Phillips. God's plan is for his people to tell other people.

### III. We now come to the last part of this passage as we meet NATHANAEL for the first time, and we find that NATHANAEL KNOWS THE WORD OF GOD.

Philip explains that they have found Jesus to be the answer to prophecy, and Nathanael replies with a stunning question, ***"Can anything good come out of Nazareth?"*** And at first, it almost seems as if Nathanael is prejudiced. We know that Nazareth was a tiny village in the middle of nowhere with a less than stellar reputation. Those from Nazareth were from the backwoods and were basically the hillbillies of ancient Israel. You know I love to make fun of Lodi from time to time, so I won't do that again; we have people here from Kentucky, so I can't go there; my family is from Tennessee, so I can't go there either - but Nazareth was a tiny

little village in the backwoods of Israel without anything really in it. There was no reason to go there. It had something of a sketchy reputation. Years ago, we took our first vacation as newlyweds up to Hurley, and somebody from the church in Janesville said, "Ooooo, Hurley!" as if there was a problem with Hurley. Apparently, Hurley (like Nazareth) has something of a public relations problem. Every other storefront on the main drag is a bar or a gentlemen's club of some kind, apparently they have had a reputation for prostitution up there, but other than that, it was a great place to visit! Suddenly, the motto, "Where 51 ends and the fun begins," took on a whole new meaning! It seems that Nazareth also had some kind of reputation. Nazareth was a town of uneducated rednecks, as we might say today. So, some have assumed that this is what Nathanael is talking about here. In his mind, there is no way that the Messiah could come from that kind of place, that he is prejudiced.

And that might have had something to do with it, but I'm thinking that it might have had more to do with prophecy itself. Not only was Nazareth never mentioned as the home of the Messiah in the Old Testament, but Nazareth was never even mentioned in the Old Testament. Instead, where was the Savior to be born? The Savior was to be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2)! So, when Philip says, "Hey, we have found the answer to prophecy, Jesus of Nazareth," it seems that Nathanael basically says, "No! This is not right! The Savior is to come from Bethlehem." So instead of prejudice, it's possible (and likely, I believe), that Nathanael knows the Word and that he has some rather high standards as to where the Messiah would actually be coming from. Of course, I'm sure Nathanael goes on to realize that Jesus was born in Bethlehem. He then went to Egypt to escape the persecution of King Herod, but the family then landed in Nazareth where he was raised. He was born in Bethlehem but raised in Nazareth. Before he hears the rest of the story, though, Nathanael objects, and he objects because he knows the word of God.

What is amazing to me is that Jesus goes on to basically change the reputation of Nazareth. In Mark 1, the demons begin to recognize "**Jesus of Nazareth.**" In Mark 10, those who are sick call out for "**Jesus of Nazareth.**" In Acts 3, Peter healed a man in the name of "**Jesus of Nazareth.**" In Acts 10, Peter explains how "**Jesus of Nazareth**" has been anointed by God and went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. In Acts 22, we have Paul explaining how on the road to Damascus the Lord came to him and says, "**I am Jesus of Nazareth.**" Jesus, then, changes the reputation of that little village. He came to this earth to save the kind of people who lived in Nazareth. Besides, by allowing the Messiah to come from Nazareth, God manages to pull off a bit of a surprise - bringing strength out of weakness, just as he did with Moses, and Joseph, and Gideon, and King David, and Peter, and Paul, and us today. God can take the most unlikely of circumstances and can do something amazing - just as he does by bringing up the Messiah in Nazareth. By the way, today, Nazareth is a thriving city. There is a congregation of God's people in Nazareth. Last night, I posted a video on the church's Facebook page, a video from a friend of mine who visited the church in Nazareth last year.

What we notice in this account, though, is that Philip doesn't get frustrated, he doesn't argue, he doesn't lay out every shred of evidence, but he simply says, "**Come and see.**" He follows the example set by John, and Andrew, and the Lord himself, "**Come and see.**" That invitation will be repeated by the woman at the well in John 4, as she goes and gets the men from the town, "**Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?**" This will go on to be the invitation from the angels to the women at the empty tomb in Matthew 28, "**Come, see the place where He was lying.**" The Christian faith is one big invitation to "**Come and see.**"

**Conclusion:**

As we close our thoughts on this passage, I'd like to apply this lesson to us with the Lord's words here to **"Follow me."** Today, we are called through the gospel. Sometimes, people will ask, "How are we called by God?" and they will wait or hesitate to obey the gospel until they have some kind of a sign. In 2 Thessalonians 2:13-15, though, Paul is writing to those Christians in the city of Thessalonica, and he says,

***<sup>13</sup> But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. <sup>14</sup> It was for this He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>15</sup> So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught, whether by word of mouth or by letter from us.***

Jesus has called us through the gospel. He calls us through the good news. He calls us today through the written word. Just as the word told Nathanael what to be looking for, so also the word calls us to obey the Lord. Jesus of Nazareth is the One who was prophesied, the answer to all of those predictions made by Moses and the Prophets. He is the Prophet like Moses. And this morning, he is calling all of us through the gospel. The gospel is the good news that he came to this earth to die in our place. We accept his offer of salvation by turning from sin and by allowing ourselves to be buried with him in baptism for the forgiveness of sins. If you have any questions, we hope you'll get in touch. But if you are ready to accept this offer right now, we would love to help in any way we can. You can let us know about your decision as we sing this next song. Let's stand and sing...

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